

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DOE-11 SOE-02 SSM-03 AID-05
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4891
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 1048

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: UNHRC
SUBJECT: 34TH SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, GENEVA,
FEB. 6 - MARCH 10

REF: STATE 22442

SUMMARY: EMBASSY BELIEVES STRONGLY THAT TALKING POINTS ON
HRC ARAB/ISRAELI ISSUES (PARA. 3E REFTEL) ARE CLEARLY BIASED
AGAINST ARAB POSITION AND DAMAGE U.S. CLAIM THAT ITS HUMAN
RIGHTS POLICY IS EVEN-HANDED. WE PROPOSE REDRAFT OF TALKING
POINTS AIMED AT REFLECTING USG UNDERSTANDING THAT HUMAN
RIGHTS OF RESIDENTS OF OCCUPIED TERRITORIES BE RESPECTED.
END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE SEVERE RESERVATIONS RE PROPOSED U.S. POSITION
ON ARAB/ISRAELI ISSUES AS OUTLINED PARA. 3E, REFTEL.
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BELIEVE TALKING POINTS SHOULD BE REVISED (SEE PARA. 5) ON BASIS
FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS.

2. GOJ AND OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS HAVE WELCOMED INTENSE
USG INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES AND NATURALLY EXPECT
THIS INTEREST TO MANIFEST ITSELF IN EVEN-HANDED MANNER.
TO ARABS, MOST BLATANT VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS OCCUR

IN TERRITORIES OCCUPIED SINCE 1967 BY ISRAEL. JORDAN, AS SOVEREIGN OF LARGEST PART OF OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, FEELS IT HAS A SIGNIFICANT RESPONSIBILITY (REGARDLESS OF RABAT SUMMIT DECISIONS) AMONG ALL ARAB STATES FOR PROTECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF RESIDENTS OF OCCUPIED WEST BANK. IT IS, AFTER ALL, JORDANIAN LAW THAT PREVAILS ON WEST BANK. BUT GOJ INVESTIGATION OF CONTRAVENTION OF ITS LAWS IS OF COURSE PREVENTED BY ISRAELI MILITARY OCCUPATION OF TERRITORY. GOJ AND ARAB CONCERN FOR PROBLEM FURTHER EXACERBATED BY GOI REFUSAL TO PERMIT RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF ARAB WEST BANK RESIDENTS. ARABS NATURALLY EXPECT U.S. TO LEAD PUSH FOR CORRECTIVE ACTION, NOT TO ADVOCATE THAT PROBLEM BE IGNORED OR WHITE-WASHED. TALKING POINTS REFTEL CANNOT FAIL TO LEAVE JORDAN WITH LATTER IMPRESSION.

3. PARA. 3B OF REFTEL NOTES U.S. DESIRE IN HRC TO REINFORCE EVEN-HANDED NATURE OF ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. TALKING POINTS AS CURRENTLY PHRASED ON ARAB/ISRAELI ISSUES WILL BE READ HERE AS REFLECTING A DISTINCT U.S. BIAS TOWARDS ISRAEL AND AN ABNEGATION OF EVEN-HANDEDNESS. FURTHERMORE, CRITICISM OF ISRAEL IN HRC WILL BE SEEN AS HARDLY "UNWARRANTED". U.S. HAS, AFTER ALL, REGULARLY CRITICIZED GOI FOR ITS SETTLEMENTS POLICY. ESTABLISHMENT OF SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED
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TERRITORIES IS VIEWED BY GOJ AND OTHERS AS BUT ONE EXAMPLE OF THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF TERRITORIES' RESIDENTS. IN ADDITION, ARABS WILL BE FIRST TO AGREE IN THIS CASE THAT THE DEBATE SHOULD BE "FAIR". FAIRNESS, HOWEVER, INCLUDES AGREEMENT BY GOI AND U.S. THAT ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, AS PRESIDENT HAS SAID, BE PROPERLY INVESTIGATED BY APPROPRIATE OUT-SIDE ORGANIZATIONS. INDEED, DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN WAS SEEN HERE ONLY FEW DAYS AGO ASKING THAT CASE OF AMCIT SAMI ESMAIL BE LOOKED INTO. HOW CAN WE ASK JORDAN TO DO LESS FOR ITS OWN CITIZENS IN UN CONTEXT THAN WE ARE DOING DIRECTLY? (HEAD OF JORDANIAN HRC DELEGATION(WALID SADI) IS HIMSELF FROM JERUSALEM AND INTENSELY CONCERNED WITH WEST BANK HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE.)

4. TALKING POINTS LISTED FOR AMMAN AND CAIRO (AT END OF PARA. 3E) REFLECT UNREALISTIC PERCEPTION OF JORDAN'S CURRENT POSITION IN MIDDLE EAST CONTEXT. GOJ BELIEVES VERY STRONGLY THAT U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION SHOULD ALSO BE MADE TO APPLY TO ISRAEL. GOJ WILL NOT STEP OUT IN FRONT OF ARAB OPINION TO ADVOCATE POSITION IN WHICH IT ITSELF DOES NOT BELIEVE. GOJ IS ENGAGED IN PAINFUL AND NEARLY MORIBUND POLITICAL BRIDGE-BUILDING

AMONG ITSELF AND OTHER ARAB STATES IN EFFORT TO FURTHER CHANCES OF SUCCESS ME NEGOTIATIONS. NO AMOUNT OF U.S. URGING WILL CONVINCE GOJ (PERHAPS AS OPPOSED TO EGYPT) THAT OTHER ARAB STATES WILL "FOLLOW ITS LEAD" ON SUCH CRUCIAL ISSUE. IT IS IN ADDITION NOT APPROPRIATE TO SUGGEST THAT JORDAN SHOULD JOIN EGYPT IN SUCH AN EFFORT AT A TIME WHEN THE MAJORITY OF ARAB STATES ARE RANGED AGAINST EGYPT, AND QUESTION OF "ALIGNMENT" WITH EGYPT IS CENTRAL TO CRUCIAL ME NEGOTIATIONS.

5. IN VIEW OF THESE CONCERNS, SUGGEST TALKING POINTS BE AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

--THE QUESTION OF ISRAELI OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WILL BE ONE OF THE FIRST ITEMS
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TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE HRC. WE UNDERSTAND THE CONCERNS OF ARAB GOVERNMENTS, AND PARTICULARLY JORDAN, THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF RESIDNETS OF THE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL BE RESPECTED.

-- THE HRC HAS MANY IMPORTANT ISSUES SUCH AS THIS ONE SLATED FOR DISCUSSION DURING ITS FIVE-WEEK SESSION WITH ONLY A LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME FOR THE PROCEEDINGS. WE HOPE THIS INITIAL DEBATE WILL CONSUME ITS APPROPRIATE SHARE OF THE COMMISSION'S TIME AND BE AS FAIR AND AS EVEN-HANDED AS POSSIBLE.

--WE THEREFORE HOPE ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN PURSUING A NEGOTIATED PEACE WILL HELP TO AVOID DEFLECTION OF THE DEBATE AWAY FROM THE CENTRAL HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE TOWARDS A GENERAL DEBATE ON THE MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATION ISSUE. THIS ISSUE IS CURRENTLY THE SUBJECT OF INTENSE NEGOTIATION; WE BELIEVE QUIET DIPLOMACY IS THE BEST ROUTE TOWARDS ITS RESOLUTION.
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